Dear Parents/Guardians at Bellevue Middle School,

We want you to know that the Metro Public Health Department has confirmed a case of hepatitis A at Bellevue Middle School. Health officials want you to know that hepatitis A has been a required vaccine for children attending school for many years and the hepatitis A vaccine is highly effective in preventing hepatitis A. We are working closely with Metro Schools to identify students that are missing the required vaccine.

The likelihood of exposure to children and adults is low, but out of abundance of caution, Health Department staff will be contacting families of unvaccinated students at Bellevue Middle to let them know hepatitis A vaccine is available at the following Health Department health centers, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday:

- East Health Center, 1015 East Trinity Lane
- Lentz Health Center, 2500 Charlotte Ave.
- Woodbine Health Center, 224 Oriel Ave

The hepatitis A vaccine can also be found at area pediatrician offices for those with insurance. Many insurance plans cover the costs of hepatitis A vaccine without a deductible or co-pay, if administered by an in-network health care provider.

Large hepatitis A outbreaks have occurred since early 2017 in several states, including Tennessee.

Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus. Common symptoms include: fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, jaundice (yellowing of eyes and skin), and clay-colored stools. The disease can be severe in some people, possibly requiring hospitalization. Most recover completely within a few weeks. Hepatitis A usually spreads when a person unknowingly ingests the virus from objects, food, or drinks contaminated by small, undetected amounts of stool from an infected person. Hepatitis A can also spread from close personal contact with an infected person such as through sex or caring for someone who is ill. The best way to prevent hepatitis A is through vaccination.

Parents with questions about hepatitis A can call the Health Department at 615/340-5632. Those with questions specific to Bellevue Middle can call 615-662-3000.

For more information about hepatitis A please visit:

https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/index.htm